



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO



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Mayor's Press Office
(312) 744-3334
press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR EMANUEL AND CPS OPEN CITY'S FIFTH PARENT UNIVERSITY IN PULLMAN
Newest Site Builds on Mayor's Commitment to Double Parental Engagement Centers by 2019

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Chief Education Officer Dr. Janice K. Jackson today joined school and community leaders at Corliss High School to launch the newest CPS Parent University. The Parent University program was launched by the Emanuel Administration in 2015 to engage and support parents, building upon the 46 Parent Engagement Centers established since the Mayor took office. Plans are underway for the district to expand upon this growth and serve more families across the city by adding 15 new Parent Engagement Centers by the end of 2016.

"The most important thing we can do to help our students achieve their potential is to instill a value of lifelong learning that engages parents and empowers them to support their children every step of the way," said Mayor Emanuel. "Parent Universities will provide our communities with the resources they need to ensure students and parents are successful throughout school and in life."

Over the last year, 1,400 parents across the city have participated in Parent University. Parent University is an innovative neighborhood-based program that uses a combination of in-person and online learning to help parents get more information about educational opportunities that can drive success for both them and their children. Parent University also helps parents learn more about navigating the District's many programs, including how to volunteer for school activities, report card pick-up procedures and how to perform the duties of a Local School Council member.

"As a former teacher and principal, I know first-hand the benefits family and community engagement can have on a student's success," said CPS CEo Dr. Janice K. Jackson. "Parent Universities are an innovative way to make education a family affair. As we work to solve the CPS financial crisis, we need everyone – from parents to community members – working to support our schools and students. Parent Universities ensure they have access to the resources needed to help their children achieve success."

The five Parent Universities are a part of a larger network of 46 Parent Engagement Centers, which are school-based sites for parents and the immediate school community to access continued learning and educational resources. By 2019, CPS will double the number of Parent Engagement Centers—which dually provide parents with continued learning opportunities and ways to become more involved in their student's education—and reinforce a culture of learning throughout the city. An additional 15 centers will open by the end of 2016.

Each Parent University is equipped with a computer lab, a parent resource room, an office area and an activity room, and will offer a variety of computer programs designed to teach school, job and life skills that can be keys to positive development. Offerings include money and time management, how to use Microsoft Office, how to perform online research, how to search for jobs and build a career, public speaking and team building techniques. Additionally, the City Colleges of Chicago has begun partnering with the Spencer and Clemente sites to provide GED and College Bridge programming.

“The work we have done to strengthen the Pullman community has paid off—specifically with investments to strengthen our schools that will, in turn, revitalize our community,” said 9th Ward Alderman Anthony Beale. “We welcome the new Parent University at Corliss High School that will not only increase parent engagement in our children’s education, but will create more resources for the surrounding community to benefit from.”

Members of the CPS Parent University have an opportunity to earn digital “achievement badges” for completing tasks such as attending a report card pickup, participating in a workshop, volunteering at a school function and how to perform the duties of a Local School Council member. Badges can be used to link one learning opportunity to the next, and serve as an indicator of achievement to colleges and employers.

All virtual and in-person learning opportunities across citywide Parent Universities are absolutely free to all CPS parents and guardians. Parents can sign up at <https://chicagocityoflearning.org/parentuniversity>.

Corliss High School is the fifth CPS Parent University location to open since 2012, joining Roberto Clemente Community High School in Humboldt Park; Spencer Technology Academy in Austin; Sir Miles Davis Magnet Elementary in Englewood; and the former Colman Elementary School in Bronzeville.

This latest investment in Corliss builds on the Mayor’s commitment to strengthening the city’s neighborhood schools. Corliss was designated an Early College STEM high school in 2012 and will graduate its first class of STEM program graduates this year. STEM program graduates are eligible to enroll in City Colleges at no cost.

Chicago Public Schools serves 392,000 students in 664 schools. It is the nation’s third-largest school district.

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